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INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: EU RE: LEBANON: BUILDING ON ARAB LEAGUE EFFORTS

REF: STATE 49259

Classified By: Alyce Tidball, USEU Deputy Minister Counselor for Political Affairs, for reasons 1.4. (B) and (D)

¶1. (C) Post delivered reftel points to EU Council Desk Officer for Lebanon Colin Scicluna on Thursday, May 15. The EU strongly supports Arab League efforts. The May 15 statement issued by EU HiRep Javier Solana welcomed the Arab League initiative as a demonstration of solidarity with the Lebanon, reiterating the EU's full support for Lebanon, for its legitimate government led by Siniora, and for its security services. Scicluna said the EU does not want to make a direct reference to Hizballah, because it could compromise any possible role the EU may be called upon to play now or in the future. The EU does not want to be too critical of any "crucial party" during this delicate time of negotiations.

¶2. (C) Regarding designation of Hizballah as a terrorist organization, Scicluna reiterated that the issue is not even being debated in the EU at this point. All member states share the view that Hizballah is not a good actor, but beyond that the EU wants to be careful not to appear "unbalanced." In a separate conversation on May 7, Scicluna said the issue would not even be put on the EU agenda, because they would never be able to achieve unanimity. On the other hand, he said, the threat of designation could help modify Hizballah's behavior.

Murray

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